



EL DORADO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN PARKS AND RECREATION ELEMENT

PRINCIPLE

The General Plan must identify the types of governmental services, including parks and recreation facilities, which are necessary to meet the needs of residents and businesses and must provide a fiscally responsible approach for ensuring that these service needs are met.

INTRODUCTION

This Parks and Recreation Element establishes goals and policies that address the long range provision and maintenance of parks and recreation facilities needed to improve the quality of life of existing and future El Dorado County residents. El Dorado County residents are in need of additional recreational lands and facilities, and the policies and implementation measures included in this element are responsive to that demand. The overall focus of the Parks and Recreation Element is on providing recreational opportunities and facilities on a regional scale, including trails and waterways; securing adequate funding sources; and increasing tourism and recreation-based businesses. The element also addresses the location, demand, management, and provision of parks and recreation facilities.

STATE AUTHORIZATION

The Parks and Recreation Element is consistent with the requirements set forth in the California Government Code Section 65302 and other applicable sections. The California Government Code Section 65302 specifies the elements that must be included in county and city general plans. However, local governments may adopt any other elements or address any other subjects that relate to the physical development of a county or city (Government Code 65303). Though not required by law, the inclusion of the Parks and Recreation Element is optional. However, once an optional element is adopted, it carries the same importance as the required elements and must be internally consistent with the other elements of the General Plan. Additionally, under the Quimby Act (Government Code Section 66477), conditioning subdivision approval upon the provision of park or recreation areas must be based upon an assessment of needs contained in the general plan.

This element encompasses portions of the mandatory Land Use and Open Space elements set forth by the California Government Code. Provisions within each of these elements apply to land for recreation. Specifically, State law requires that the general plan shall include:

“A land use element which designates the proposed general distribution and general location and extent of the use of land for . . . recreation . . .”
(Government Code Section 65302 (a)).

An open space element that designates land “for outdoor recreation, including . . . areas of . . . cultural value; areas particularly suited for park and recreation purposes, including access to lakeshores, beaches, and rivers and streams; and areas that serve as links between major recreation and open space reservations, including utility easements, banks of rivers and streams, trails . . .”
(Government Code Section 65560 (b)).

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ELEMENTS

Additionally within this General Plan, preferred locations for parks are also addressed in the Land Use Element. The use of open space for recreational activities is also discussed in the Conservation and Open Space Element. In the Land Use Element, scenic and cultural resources and scenic roadways are discussed. Bikeways are also discussed in the Circulation Element of this General Plan.

ORGANIZATION OF THE ELEMENT

The Parks and Recreation Element policy section addresses: (1) acquisition and development of regional, community, and neighborhood parks; (2) provision of a trail system; (3) conservation and promotion of waterways for recreation; (4) coordination with other recreation providers; (5) securement of funding; and (6) provision of opportunities to increase tourism.

POLICY SECTION

PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

GOAL 9.1: PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Provide adequate recreation opportunities and facilities including developed regional and community parks, trails, and resource-based recreation areas for the health and welfare of all residents and visitors of El Dorado County.

OBJECTIVE 9.1.1: PARK ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT

The County shall assume primary responsibility for the acquisition and development of regional parks and assist in the acquisition and development of neighborhood and community parks to serve County residents and visitors.

Policy 9.1.1.1 The County shall assist in the development of regional, community, and neighborhood parks, ensure a diverse range of recreational opportunities at a regional, community, and neighborhood level, and provide park design guidelines and development standards for park development. The following national standards shall be used as guidelines for the acquisition and development of park facilities:

Guidelines For Acquisition and Development of Park Facilities	
Park Types	Developed
Regional Parks	1.5 ac/1,000 population
Community Parks	1.5 ac/1,000 population
Neighborhood Parks	2.0 ac/1,000 population
<i>Specific Standards (Neighborhood and Community Parks)</i>	
Cameron Park Community Services District	5.0 ac/1,000 population
El Dorado Hills Community Services District	5.0 ac/1,000 population
Planned Communities	5.0 ac/1,000 population

The parkland dedication/in-lieu fees shall be directed towards the purchase and funding of neighborhood and community parks.

Policy 9.1.1.2 Neighborhood parks shall be primarily focused on serving walk-to or bike-to recreation needs. When possible, neighborhood parks should be adjacent to schools. Neighborhood parks are generally 2 to 10 acres in size and may include a playground, tot lot, turf areas, and picnic facilities.

Policy 9.1.1.3 Community parks and recreation facilities shall provide a focal point and gathering place for the larger community. Community parks are generally 10 to 44 acres in size, are for use by all sectors and age groups, and may include multi-purpose fields, ball fields, group picnic areas, playground, tot lot, multi-purpose hardcourts, swimming pool, tennis courts, and a community center.

Policy 9.1.1.4 Regional parks and recreation facilities shall incorporate natural resources such as lakes and creeks and serve a region involving more than one community. Regional parks generally range in size from 30 to 10,000 acres with the preferred size being several hundred acres. Facilities may include multi-purpose fields, ball fields, group picnic areas, playgrounds,

swimming facilities, amphitheaters, tennis courts, multi-purpose hardcourts, shooting sports facilities, concessionaire facilities, trails, nature interpretive centers, campgrounds, natural or historic points of interest, and community multi-purpose centers.

- Policy 9.1.1.5 Parkland dedicated under the Quimby Act must be suitable for active recreation uses and:
- A. Shall have a maximum average slope of 10 percent;
 - B. Shall have sufficient access for a community or neighborhood park; and
 - C. Shall not contain significant constraints that would render the site unsuitable for development.
- Policy 9.1.1.6 The primary responsibilities of the County as a recreation provider shall be the establishment and provision of a regional park system to serve the residents of and visitors to the County.
- Policy 9.1.1.7 Encourage and support efforts of independent recreation districts to provide parks and recreation facilities. The joint efforts of Community Services Districts, independent recreation districts, school districts, cities, and the County to provide parks and recreation facilities shall also be encouraged.
- Policy 9.1.1.8 The County shall prepare, implement, and regularly update a Parks Master Plan and Parks and Recreation Capital Improvement Program to meet current and future park and recreation needs.
- Policy 9.1.1.9 The County will identify and secure funding sources, where possible, to implement the Capital Improvement Program to meet the needs identified in the *Interim Master Plan for Parks, Recreation Facilities, and Trails*.
- Policy 9.1.1.10 As a priority, the County shall continue to plan for and develop existing County owned regional and community park sites.
- Policy 9.1.1.11 Focus park acquisition on recreation oriented facilities.

OBJECTIVE 9.1.2: COUNTY TRAILS

Provide for a County-wide, non-motorized, multi-purpose trail system and trail linkages to existing and proposed local, State, and Federal trail systems. The County will actively seek to establish trail linkages between schools, parks, residential, commercial, and industrial uses and to coordinate this non-motorized system with the vehicular circulation system.

- Policy 9.1.2.1 The proposed El Dorado Trail/Pony Express Trail as well as trails connecting regional parks shall be the County's primary responsibility for trail establishment and maintenance.
- Policy 9.1.2.2 The standards for the County trail system regarding general location, width, steepness, signage, offer of easement dedication, and other design standards are detailed in the Hiking and Equestrian Trails Master Plan and should be updated as necessary.
- Policy 9.1.2.3 The County will assume the responsibility, where possible, of acquiring and developing regional trails outside the boundaries of the cities, Community Service Districts, and park and recreation districts having park and recreation taxing authority and will assist areas such as the Georgetown Divide Recreation District with exceptionally large geographic areas with acquisition and development of trails.
- Policy 9.1.2.4 Evaluate every discretionary application as well as public facilities planning with regard to their ability to implement the *Hiking and Equestrian Trails Master Plan* and the *Bikeway Master Plan*.
- Policy 9.1.2.5 All discretionary applications may be conditioned to provide an irrevocable offer of a trail easement dedication and construction of trails as designated on the Trails Master Plan provided it can be shown that such trails will serve as loops and/or links to designated or existing trails, existing or proposed schools, public parks and open space areas, and existing or proposed public transit nodes (e.g., bus stops, park and ride lots). Parkland dedication credit shall be given where applicable for provision of land and trail improvements that aid in implementing the Trails Master Plan.
- Policy 9.1.2.6 A priority list of County trails for alignment delineation, acquisition, engineering, and development shall be developed. Trails with historical associations or essential trail linkages shall be given a higher priority in the Capital Improvement Plan.
- Policy 9.1.2.7 Mapping of parcel specific regional trail alignments shall be completed by within one year of General Plan adoption so that trail easements may be acquired at the earliest possible date.
- Policy 9.1.2.8 Integrate and link, where possible, existing and proposed National, State, regional, County, city and local hiking, bicycle, and equestrian trails for public use.
- Policy 9.1.2.9 The County shall update the *Bikeway Master Plan* and include the bikeways system on the Trails Master Plan Map within two years of General Plan adoption. The *Bikeway Master Plan* shall be reviewed

annually for changes and possible updating. Major revision studies shall be conducted in accordance with Policy 2.9.1.2. The bicycle routes established in the *Bikeway Master Plan* are considered a part of both the Parks and Recreation Element and the Transportation and Circulation Element of the County General Plan.

- Policy 9.1.2.10 The County shall establish a procedure by which local trails can be recognized and designated.
- Policy 9.1.2.11 Recognize the national historic trails that are located within the County and promote and pursue cooperative efforts with private, regional, State, and Federal agencies to develop and fund these trails on public and private land.

OBJECTIVE 9.1.3: INCORPORATION OF PARKS AND TRAILS

Incorporate parks and non-motorized trails into urban and rural areas to promote the scenic, economic, and social importance of recreation and open space areas.

- Policy 9.1.3.1 Linear parks and trails may be incorporated along rivers, creeks, and streams wherever possible.
- Policy 9.1.3.2 On public lands and where trails can be developed, maintained, and managed, a system of trails along the American and Cosumnes River systems may be created to increase public access to scenic waterways.
- Policy 9.1.3.3 Coordinate with Federal, State, other agencies, and private landholders to provide public access to recreational resources, including rivers, lakes, and public lands.
- Policy 9.1.3.4 To the extent possible, maximize the use of the regional park and trail system by the physically handicapped and developmentally disabled as detailed in the Federal Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Policy 9.1.3.5 Recognize that segments of the California and Pony Express National Historic Trails are located within public and private land areas of the County. Give priority to County activities that will establish contiguous recreational trails along these alignments and pursue funding to construct and maintain trails along these alignments.
- Policy 9.1.3.6 Support the establishment of a California National Historic Trail interpretive and visitors center in El Dorado County.
- Policy 9.1.3.7 Support the establishment of a Pony Express National Historic Trail interpretive and visitors center in El Dorado County.

OBJECTIVE 9.1.4: RIVERS AND WATERWAYS

Conserve and promote the waterways of El Dorado County, particularly the South Fork of the American River, as recreational and economic assets.

Policy 9.1.4.1 The *River Management Plan, South Fork of the American River*, (River Management Plan) is considered the implementation plan for the river management policies of this chapter.

Policy 9.1.4.2 Support the acquisition of a public river access adjacent to the Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park.

OBJECTIVE 9.1.5: RECREATION COORDINATION

Coordinate future park and trail planning and development with Federal, State, cities, community service districts, school districts, and other recreation agencies and districts to provide increased recreation opportunities through shared use of facilities, continuity and efficiency of operation, and a more coordinated and balanced park system.

Policy 9.1.5.1 Encourage the formation of independent rural recreation districts to provide rural community and neighborhood parks for those areas desiring a higher level of service.

FUNDING

GOAL 9.2: FUNDING

Secure an adequate and stable source of funding to implement a comprehensive County-wide parks and recreation plan.

OBJECTIVE 9.2.1: ADEQUATE FUNDS

Secure adequate funds to implement the Interim Master Plan, the Trails Master Plan, the *Bikeway Master Plan*, and the *River Management Plan* to provide for the acquisition, development, maintenance, and management of parks and recreation facilities.

OBJECTIVE 9.2.2: QUIMBY ACT

Land dedicated to the County under the Quimby Act and Quimby in-lieu fees shall continue to be used primarily to meet neighborhood park needs but may assist in meeting the community park standards as well.

Policy 9.2.2.1 The Parks and Recreation Commission shall review all tentative subdivision maps of 50 parcels or more outside community service districts and special recreation districts boundaries and will provide

recommendations to the Planning Commission for appropriate provision of recreation services.

Policy 9.2.2.2 New development projects creating community or neighborhood parks shall provide mechanisms (e.g., homeowners associations, or benefit assessment districts) for the ongoing development, operation, and maintenance needs of these facilities if annexation to an existing parks and recreation service district/provider is not possible.

Policy 9.2.2.3 The County will cooperate with cities and independently funded districts to help acquire land and develop facilities for neighborhood and community parks as funding allows.

Policy 9.2.2.4 The County shall work with local districts and County services area recreation advisory committees to secure neighborhood park sites by use of the Quimby Act Implementing Ordinance.

Policy 9.2.2.5 The County shall establish a development fee program applicable to all new development to fund park and recreation improvements and acquisition of parklands such that minimum neighborhood, community, and regional park standards are achieved. This fee is in addition to Quimby Act requirements that address parkland acquisition only. The fee will be adjusted periodically to fully fund the improvements identified in the Parks and Capital Improvement Program concurrent with development over a five-year period.

Policy 9.2.2.6 The County shall actively pursue lands that can be transferred to the County from Federal, State, and other ownerships suitable and needed for public use.

Policy 9.2.2.7 The County shall strongly encourage the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to divest itself of all lands that are not environmentally sensitive within the County to provide ownership so the County can reap the benefits therefrom.

OBJECTIVE 9.2.3: GRANTS, FEES, AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Other types of funding including Federal, State, and private grants, user-fees, concession agreements, and private contributions to fund the construction of facilities such as trails along abandoned railroad lines (Rails-to-Trails) along rivers and creeks and to acquire historical or archaeologically significant land for parks.

Policy 9.2.3.1 Institute a system whereby user fees and concessions of various sorts (e.g., food and beverage vendors, gift shops, and boat rental facilities), wherever possible, contribute to the operation and maintenance costs of a facility.

- Policy 9.2.3.2 The River Management program for the South Fork of the American River shall continue to be funded primarily through commercial permits and user fees.
- Policy 9.2.3.3 Actively encourage private sector donations of land and/or conservation easements through the use of various land use mechanisms (such as density transfers).
- Policy 9.2.3.4 Actively encourage private sector donations of structures, materials, funds, and/or labor to reduce acquisition, development, and maintenance costs.
- Policy 9.2.3.5 The County will encourage private sector development, operation, and maintenance of recreation facilities.

TOURISM AND RECREATION USES

GOAL 9.3: RECREATION AND TOURISM

Greater opportunities to capitalize on the recreational resources of the County through tourism and recreational based businesses and industries.

OBJECTIVE 9.3.1: RECREATIONAL AND TOURIST USES

Protect and maintain existing recreational and tourist based assets such as Apple Hill, State historic parks, the Lake Tahoe Basin, wineries, South Fork of the American River, and other water sport areas and resorts and encourage the development of additional recreation/tourism businesses and industries.

OBJECTIVE 9.3.2: NATURAL RESOURCES

Protect and preserve those resources that attract tourism.

OBJECTIVE 9.3.3: MAJOR RECREATIONAL EVENTS

Actively encourage major recreational events (e.g., professional bicycle races, running events, whitewater kayaking, equestrian shows, rodeos, and athletic events) to showcase El Dorado County and increase tourism.

OBJECTIVE 9.3.4: HISTORICAL RESOURCES

Recognize the values of the historical resources in preserving the County’s cultural heritage and for contributing to tourism, recreation, and the economy of the County.

- Policy 9.3.4.1 Support the establishment of a Director of Museums and cultural resources preservation function.

Policy 9.3.4.2 The County will encourage the development of interpretive centers for local historical sites and/or events of historical interest.

OBJECTIVE 9.3.5: HISTORICAL EVENTS

The County shall actively encourage major events relating to the County’s history and way of life such as historical reenactment of the Pony Express and wagon trains, agricultural festivities, and historical fairs.

OBJECTIVE 9.3.6: COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS

Recognize the importance of the fairgrounds to the County’s local economy for its major recreational, agricultural, and tourism facilities.

Policy 9.3.6.1 Continue to provide a fairgrounds to serve El Dorado County residents and visitors as the major location for large public events, including fairs, symphonies, horse shows, and farmers’ markets.

Policy 9.3.6.2 Move the fairground site to a location that can safely serve the current and projected population of El Dorado County (recognizing that the current fairground site is inadequate) and potentially accommodate a West Slope Regional Park facility or Sports Complex.

OBJECTIVE 9.3.7: SKIING INDUSTRY

Expansion of the skiing industry consistent with the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Regional Plan and the Eldorado National Forest and Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit Forest Plans.

OBJECTIVE 9.3.8: CAMPING FACILITIES

Expansion and development of additional Federal, State, and private overnight camping facilities including recreational vehicles and tent camping within the County while requiring appropriate mitigation of adverse environmental impacts.

OBJECTIVE 9.3.9: TOURIST LODGING

Policy 9.3.9.1 The County will encourage the development of private lodging facilities by modifying the Zoning Ordinance sections dealing with tourist related facilities.

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

MEASURE PR-A

Prepare and implement a Parks Master Plan and Parks and Recreation Capital Improvement Program, focusing on the following:

- Development of sufficient park and recreation land to serve the residents for neighborhood, community, and regional parkland;
- Applicability of parkland dedications under the Quimby Act;
- Serving residents of and visitors to the County;
- Identification of funding sources; and
- Maintenance.

[Objective 9.1.1]

Responsibility:	General Services Department, Airports, Parks, and Grounds Division
Time Frame:	Adopt Master Plan within five years of General Plan adoption.

MEASURE PR-B

Develop and implement a program to identify and pursue alternative methods to fund and/or support the acquisition and operation of parks and recreation facilities, including raw land. Funds may be used by the Airports, Parks, and Grounds Division of the County General Services Department or transferred to other public parks and recreation providers as deemed appropriate. [Policies 9.1.1.9, 9.2.2.5, and 9.2.3.1]

Responsibility:	General Services Department, Airports, Parks, and Grounds Division
Time Frame:	Implementation will be ongoing for the life of the General Plan.

MEASURE PR-C

Update the *Bikeway Master Plan* and *Hiking and Equestrian Trails Master Plan*. Both plans shall contain provisions for regular plan monitoring and updating. [Policies TC-4a, TC-4d, TC-4e, 9.1.2.1, 9.1.2.2, 9.1.2.3, 9.1.2.6 through 9.1.2.11, and all policies under Objective 9.1.3]

Responsibility:	General Services Department, Airports, Parks, and Grounds Division and Department of Transportation
Time Frame:	Adopt the updated <i>Bikeway Master Plan</i> within two years of General Plan adoption. Update the <i>Hiking and Equestrian Trails Master Plan</i> within three years of General Plan adoption. Implementation will be ongoing for the life of the General Plan.

MEASURE PR-D

Plan for and develop interpretive centers for historical trails and sites. [Policies 9.1.3.6, 9.1.3.7, 9.3.4.2, and 11.1.12.5]

Responsibility:	General Services Department, Airports, Parks and Grounds Division
Time Frame:	Within ten years of General Plan adoption.

MEASURE PR-E

Maintain and implement the *El Dorado County River Management Plan* (Environmental Stewardship & Planning 2001) for management of recreational activities on the South Fork of the American River, including the provision of additional river access adjacent to Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park. [Policy 9.1.4.2]

Responsibility:	General Services Department, Airports, Parks, and Grounds Division
Time Frame:	Review and update the plan within eight years of General Plan adoption. Implementation will be ongoing for the life of the General Plan.

MEASURE PR-F

Develop a program to facilitate the formation of independent recreation districts. The program should include coordination with the Local Agency Formation Commission. [Policy 9.1.5.1]

Responsibility:	General Services Department, Airports, Parks and Grounds Division
Time Frame:	Ongoing as needed

MEASURE PR-G

Work with independent recreation districts to support efforts to provide parks and recreation facilities. [Policies 9.1.1.7 and 9.2.2.3]

Responsibility:	Planning Department and General Services Department, Airports, Parks and Grounds Division
Time Frame:	Ongoing

MEASURE PR-H

Develop and implement a parks and recreation fee program that addresses the following:

- A. For projects subject to Quimby Act requirements, additional fees for the actual construction and maintenance of parks and recreation facilities;
- B. For projects not subject to Quimby Act requirements, fees for the acquisition of parkland and for the construction and maintenance of parks and recreation facilities; and
- C. Coordination with local parks and recreation providers regarding fee collection and disbursement to those providers.

[Policies 9.2.2.2 and 9.2.2.5]

Responsibility:	Planning Department and General Services Department, Airports, Parks, and Grounds Division
Time Frame:	Develop and implement program within five years of General Plan adoption.

MEASURE PR-I

Develop and implement a program to encourage major recreational event sponsors to hold events in El Dorado County. [Objectives 9.3.3 and 9.3.5]

Responsibility:	Office of Economic Development
Time Frame:	Within ten years of General Plan adoption.

MEASURE PR-J

Establish a working group or formal contacts to coordinate the actions of County agencies and resource-based recreation providers in the county. Develop a plan to address recreation planning, promotion of recreational tourism, and review of projects with the potential to affect resource-based recreation. [Policies 9.2.2.3 and 9.2.2.4]

Responsibility:	General Services Department, Airports, Parks, and Grounds Division
Time Frame:	Develop working group or contacts within five years of General Plan adoption. Develop plan to address planning and project review within three years thereafter. Coordination will be ongoing.

MEASURE PR-K

Identify federal and state lands that could be transferred to County ownership and develop program to facilitate said transfer. [Policies 9.2.2.6 and 9.2.2.7]

Responsibility:	Planning Department and General Services Department, Property Division
Time Frame:	Within ten years of General Plan adoption.

MEASURE PR-L

Accept private sector donations of land, easements, structures, materials and funds for the development and maintenance of parks and recreation facilities. [Policies 9.2.3.3, 9.2.3.4, and 9.2.3.5]

Responsibility:	General Services Department, Airports, Parks and Grounds Division
Time Frame:	Ongoing

MEASURE PR-M

Identify a suitable location and work with the El Dorado County Fair to move the fairgrounds from its existing site. [Policy 9.3.6.2]

Responsibility:	Planning Department and General Services Department, Property Division
Time Frame:	Identify site within ten years of General Plan adoption.